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Week 31: WFL

Sheila Walsh and Tammy Trent

Mission Special #2

SHEILA: Hi! Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Sheila Walsh. You're going to be very, very happy that you tuned in to today's program. Over the years, we've had so many close ministry partner friends; you've got to meet some of them, Peter Pretorius and his son Isak. But there is someone who has been a friend of *LIFE Outreach International* for many years and is also one of my friends, and one of my favorite people on the planet, and she is here with us today. Welcome Tammy Trent!

TAMMY: Oh, I'm so happy to be with you. You are my second favorite person in the whole world.

SHEILA: Oh, who is the first?

TAMMY: Um... Barry! [Laughing]

SHEILA: Well, that's bologna! But one of the things that I love about you being here is that obviously, you have this incredible musical ministry. I love your music. My son had a crush on you when he was five. But you also have a heart for the ministry that we do here at *LIFE*. How did you start with that? Do you remember?

TAMMY: Sheila, I think maybe on my second album I came here with Trent, my husband. And I don't know, there was something about that time here that was so special to me. You know when you meet somebody when there is that instant connection and I felt that with so many of them. What's so awesome about that today is so many of them are still here. So through the

years, our relationship has continued to grow. They've stepped in the gap in my lifetime when I've needed them so much, just to know that they were there for me and loved me so. And I love this ministry. So I can't thank God enough for putting me in places and surrounding me with people that are just real, genuine, authentic, and matter. They're making a difference. So I feel very privileged to be here.

SHEILA: You're greatly loved here. James and Betty love you so much. All the staff do. When I announced to even our makeup artist, that Tammy is coming in, she is like yes!

TAMMY: I get to make her cute! [Laughing]

SHEILA: Well, I think God did that. We're going to take a look at you on the ground with one of our missions and then we'll come back and talk about the impact that had on your life. So watch this.

On the mission field

TAMMY: When we walk into these villages, they basically are just looking at us asking can you help? Can you do something?

>> She is saying we don't have another one what to do? We need to use this one.

ANNOUNCER: For children of poverty, gathering at a pond or stream to have fun is not the reason they're there. It is for the purpose of survival. Without water, these children and their families would not live more than a week. And when they have no other choice but to drink contaminated water, illness and all too often death become the bitter consequence of that inescapable choice.

TAMMY: Not one child has ever said the water is perfect, the water is great, I'm feeling fine. Child after child, the same story, they're struggling.

ANNOUNCER: Our mission teams have spoken with heartbroken families from Cambodia in the heart of Asia to windswept Zambia in Southern Africa, in rural villages in Central America, and poverty-stricken areas of South Asia whose children's waterborne illnesses were so severe they died before anything could be done to save them.

So massive is the problem that nearly 800 million people worldwide do not have access to clean water.

TAMMY: There are hundreds of thousands of children dying every year because of contaminated water. Let's change that for them. Let's be the change. Let's do something now. Let's not wait until it is too late until we lose another child who can't do anything about it until we lose another family until they can't do anything about it. We can do something now. We have an opportunity to be life to so many people who need it so desperately through fresh clean water.

End of video

In the studio

SHEILA: Tammy, you and I can laugh and joke because we've been friends for so many years but this is really critical. What's happening around the world, 800 million people do not have access to clean water. What do you remember most about your trips? What left the greatest impression on you?

TAMMY: It's hard for me to even watch that now and that was probably a few years ago that we did that trip because the story is still the same. There are so many still without. Yes, we have made an impact in so many places that we've gone. Praise God! Thank God for that and so many people have helped us do that. But there are still so many that are without.

And every time I get on a plane and I land in a different country, it's like you have a massive assignment ahead of you, Tammy. Make sure you serve these people well. And so I get to go into these places and I hear story after story, devastation, the heartache, the disappointment. So many of these stories are exactly the same thing -- it is all based on water. And so when I go and

there are just these massive, enormous stories of heartache and pain, and yet, I know that the solution to that is a very simple answer. And so I'm privileged to be a part of that kind of solution but I always leave there, and I'm telling you, Sheila, I don't know if you feel the same, but my heart is so, so heavy because I feel like the need is so desperate and it is so right now. So how can I tell the story of these people in such a significant way and accurate way so that people on the other side of the camera get it, I hear what you're saying. I know that this is real, I know that there is something I can do.

So I always feel an enormous pressure even when I come home to hope and pray that I for one, I put a lot on myself, that I've done a good job to tell the story correctly. But that we've reached the people enough to tell them that there is a great need. And by them helping, by them jumping in and leading, and in helping somehow, it's going to change not just one of those little babies but many, many. And not just for a day or a week or a quick little band-aid fix but for the rest of their lives and for generations to come.

SHEILA: I remember one of the things that hit me most on the first trip that I took, I asked the mom if I could go with her in the morning with her daughters and they were going to get water. We walked for quite a bit. When we came to what their water source was, I was horrified! Because just slightly further down there were animals in the water and the water was filthy. I remember her gathering it up in a bucket and me looking at it and thinking, oh, my gosh! How can they possibly drink this?

But then later, we drove on to another village where we had already drilled a well, and the thing that struck me that day as they were pumping out, and it said on the side: *LIFE Outreach International*. And they're pumping out this water and this little boy out of nowhere got a cup and came up and filled it and gave it to me. I thought that's just mind-blowing to me that he wants to give out of the very little they have. And now, you and I have the privilege of giving out of the abundance that God has given us. Did you get a chance to see any of the villages where we have already drilled wells?

TAMMY: Yeah! I was in Burundi, on one of the last trips, so that was when they were kind of

telling the stories and the need for water. So then I go around the corner and they are pumping water. They are still singing and they're still praising God. I'm just sitting there and they're all just standing there like not look at what you did, but look at what God has done for us! Their gratitude is enormous!

I think in those moments I just, I've got my little to-do list at home and the things that I need to do and accomplish and to take care of, and honestly, it is in that moment you just look at this and think, wow! You all are teaching me so much about gratitude and God's provision and about faith and believing for something greater. They're standing there and that was a great witness of that moment. Those are probably my favorite trips.

Not just, we're often going and we're talking about it and we're praying and we're believing for the need. But when we get to go to, you know I think I was in India a few years before that and came around a corner and they're pumping and they're pumping. It's at the beginning so no water is coming out. And they're pumping and pumping. And all of the sudden, water just shoots out the top. My expression was just -- I know they captured it, but I turned around and it was like yeah! Water!

But something that we take so for granted that they just don't have access to ever. So when they get it in that moment, just like that little guy to give to you something that he was just now getting access to is unbelievable. Really!

SHEILA: Obviously, our commitment here at *Life Today* is we want to see people who don't know Jesus come to know Jesus; that's our bottom line in everything. But I often think of Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well in Samaria; that water is the initial place where they meet. But then Jesus says to her, "But I have water that you don't even know of. And if I give you that water you will never thirst again."

I think this is part of the great evangelism. That when we give clean water in Jesus' name we've earned the right to say let me tell you about the one who sent us. For those who think, well, I can't do much. What will my contribution be, and what will that do? What would you say to

them?

TAMMY: Without coming up with an answer that sounds kind of -- made up, you have no idea what it will do if you have \$5 or \$10. It is amazing because we come together as a community and you give what you can give. God honors it, whether it is ten bucks, whether it is 25, whether it is 2500. God honors all of it because of the heart from which it comes.

You have no idea what your giving does to this ministry if that's all you have because we're all in a crazy time. So whatever we give is a sacrifice – it is a sacrifice. So I would say pray about that and ask God if there is something he would ask you to lay down to give to pour into somebody's life.

One thing I've learned in my own loss is to take my eyes off of my own needs, my own pain and it's helped me in those times when it's been about me, to think about somebody else, especially somebody else in need. It's amazing what it does to my spirit inside and how it gives me a different kind of hope. So I think even in these times, if you are like me in those moments where you also feel desperate, and this is the time I think to dig a little deeper and to sow because God promises he'll do something with it and that he'll provide for you in ways that you couldn't imagine.

So I don't ever give out of fear. I don't give out of manipulation. I don't give out of oh, my gosh! Like I don't know. Like I'm hanging on but here you go. I give and just say, God honor that. Bless it. I believe it. It doesn't matter the amount. God sees the heart and that's what I love.

SHEILA: For those who might not be familiar with your story, Tammy, you mentioned being in the studio here with Trent. You mentioned your loss. Could you just briefly tell those who don't know what that is for you?

TAMMY: Yeah. I met a kid in my youth group when I was 15 years old, fell in love, and dated for seven and a half years. Went off to Bible college, came back, and married him. One of the greatest gifts in my life was this guy. He was full of life and adventure. He loved the Lord, he

loved me well.

We were married for 11 years. During that time, I signed a record deal in Nashville and released a few albums. In September of 2001, we went to Jamaica on a mission trip. And it was a season in my life where I just sort of wondered what is next? What does God have next? I knew it was an important trip. I knew it was sort of pivotal. I knew God was up to something. I just didn't know what it was. I had no idea that just a few days later my husband would take his last breath on earth.

He was killed in a scuba diving accident while we were at the blue lagoon in Jamaica. He went for a free diving expedition that afternoon and he never came back -- and my whole world changed. Everything changed for me at that moment. I came back from that time as -- that was September 11th, 2001. So America was falling apart, a plane plowed into the Twin Towers in New York City. I'm still stuck in Jamaica. All flights grounded. But I came back from that time and just said, God, what does healing even look like? What do I do with this in my life and how do I find you in it?

I think many of us are in that season of our life right now of just saying, what do I do with this? What is happening with my life? What is happening with the world, my children, just family? What do I do with the pain that I feel? And is God still a God of miracles? Does he still want to heal? Does he still want to restore? Does he still want to provide? For me, I just stepped into the belief of yes, yes, yes, I trust you, Jesus.

And so for me even when I go on these trips, Sheila, when I think about my loss came in water, Trent was killed in the blue lagoon in water, and so when I go on these trips and I get to talk about water, this kind of water brings life. All water brings life. But my, the symbol of mine was a different thing. I think that's why this is even more significant to me of wanting to bring life, wanting to bring water to these families, to these children.

SHEILA: And honestly, that's one of the reasons that we love Tammy so much. When you walk through a hard place, a place of suffering, it is so easy to just throw your hands up in despair and

say, okay, God, I quit. But Tammy didn't. She threw herself into the arms of her Savior and is now being used to impact the lives of so many around the world.

So if you're in a tough place right now, I think one of the greatest things you could do is instead of stepping back, you step right forward into the arms of Jesus and let your life make a difference.

Help us. We are committed to drilling 350 new wells in over 20 nations. I want us to exceed that goal. I love the very end of Genesis when Joseph says to his brothers who have completely ripped him off, they trafficked him, and he says, "I know you intended that for evil but God intended it for good."

Would you take the hard things in your life and make them a but God and reach out and make a difference? Let me show you -- let me show you what that looks like.

On the mission field:

Announcer: It has been said that water is life; and the reality is, without water no one can survive. But when water is contaminated, the risk of a person becoming sick or even worse, dying from a waterborne disease increases dramatically.

Sheila: Just over my shoulder in that clump of trees several children are buried. I can't even imagine what that's like to have a grove of trees that contains the bodies of little ones who have died. They are lying now so close to their killer.

The reason these children died is because of the water. This is the only water source for this village. But the water that's in here is filthy and contaminated, and it has become what should be a source of life, water has become the source of death.

Announcer: The mothers in these villages have no other choice but to let their children drink from unsafe water sources.

Open Captions:

>> [Alice] My son's last words were, "Mom, can you carry me on your back? My legs and back hurt." When I put him down, he started vomiting and walked out and collapsed and died.

Sheila: So sorry! I just have one son and I can't imagine how painful it would be to say good-bye to my boy. It's just not something that we think oh, what a tragedy! But there is nothing we can do. We can do something. What this village needs, what this mom needs is fresh clean water. Will you help us? You're a good mom. You're a good, good mom!

End of video**In the studio:**

SHEILA: You're so right, Tammy, when you have seen that, it is like you become responsible for -- it is like there is an understanding. And particularly because it is something that we can all do something about.

One of the things I've been challenging myself with is what can I skip? Like what don't I need? Like I don't need silver nails. I could skip something like that to give people what they cannot live without. So I'm just asking you, this is not, we all flip through channels and we have all got our favorite shows that we like to binge watch and sit around and let life kind of float past. This is life and death literally for so many people.

The thing I keep thinking, Tammy is we are the body of Christ on the earth at this moment. This is not an accident. It is not a mistake. We are people of destiny. We are God's boots on the ground at this moment. So please, would you make it even a family project? So many of our kids have been brought up to think that if they don't have the latest this or that that they're deprived. Wouldn't it be incredible to share that with your family and say, let's all sacrifice something to make a difference?

I'm going to ask you to go to your phones. \$48 will give ten people clean water for about

70 years. \$144 will give 30 people clean water. And many of you -- in fact, there was a gentleman I got the sweetest call from the other day. He's up in Canada and he watched one of our Water for LIFE specials and he said, "I'm giving five wells."

TAMMY: Really?

SHEILA: I mean not everybody can do that but if you can do that, would you do it? Because here's the deal. One of these days we're going home. We're going to see Jesus face to face. None of the stuff we think we can't live without will matter. Let's give the people what they cannot live without; then we have the right to tell them about Christ who is living water.

TAMMY: 100 percent I agree. And that, at the end of the day is what we're called to do. Give me reasons, Jesus, give me places where I have the right to tell them about you and how you provide. What a privilege we also have been given to have the right to tell people about Jesus in the most authentic purest way possible -- and easy way. This is an easy way to talk about Jesus and share who he is and who he wants and longs to be in their life. Not just providing them with water, but being their provider for everything they need. What an incredible privilege that we get to have, Sheila, to do what we do, and it is an honor.

But it is not just us. We need to come together as a community to make these changes. I love being -- I love being the forefront girl to come back and tell that story because I do feel like I want to make a difference. We don't know how long we have. So I can put down my Starbucks, I can do my own nails, which by the way, I don't know what happened doing my own nails. It didn't work, but I'm going to keep doing it! Save the money. I'll send the \$50 someplace else.

But it is the little things we can change. It is the little things in our lives. Even challenge you, even a month, do it a month at a time. Say I'm going to eliminate this out of my life and whatever I would have put, I'm going to put it in a jar. At the end of the month, you'll be amazed what you would have in that jar and take it and send it. Send it off to these children, these families in these villages, and these countries all around the world that need you and that are counting on us because they're trying hard. They're doing everything they can in those villages.

We've been there. What they're eating is unbelievable. What they're drinking is unbelievable. They are doing everything they can and they just need a little help. I want to be that little help. So I'm going to stick stuff in a jar. Do my own nails, put down the Starbucks and send my money.

SHEILA: Okay, so I'm going to give you a challenge here today. I'd love you to do two things. I'd love you right now to get on the phone and send the best gift you can. Go online and give the best gift you can. And then take Tammy up on her thing. Decide for one month you're going to skip something. Put it all in a jar and then at the end of the month see how much money you've saved. And then send that off knowing that \$48 will give ten people clean water for the rest of their lives. \$144 will give 30 people clean water. And if you are one of those people who say, you know what? I want to see a well drilled and you can give \$4800.

I've been in the villages. It provides water for up to 1,000 people. When you see the laughter on the children's faces. The contrast between the children in the villages where they're drinking the contaminated water. They have very little energy. The contrast between that and a village where we've drilled a well and they're running and skipping and they're the way kids should be. So let's do that. Would you call right now and give the very best gift you can?

Begin video clip

ANNOUNCER: Across the globe, hundreds of thousands of lives are lost each year to waterborne disease, and nearly half of those are children under the age of five. Through Mission: Water for LIFE, you can give mothers hope and children a future as we provide clean, life-giving water for thousands of children and their families before it is too late.

With your gift today, you can help drill and establish 350 water wells this year. Your gift of \$24 will help provide clean water for five children. A gift of \$48 will help provide for ten. \$72 will provide for 15. And \$144 will help provide life-giving water for 30 people for a lifetime!

With your gift of any amount, we'll send you the *God's Daily Promise* devotional set. These four seasonal devotionals each contain a daily scripture, inspirational message, and room to journal your prayers and insights from God's Word.

With your gift of \$100 or more, please request the "Faith, Hope, and Love" coaster set. All four beautiful sandstone coasters come in an elegant natural wood holder and artistically display the words of First Corinthians 13:13.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1200 to help provide water for 250 people or a gift of \$4800 to help sponsor a complete well. And you may request our inspiring bronze sculpture, "Let the Children Come."

This is the last day! Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of video

On the mission field

JAMES: Let me show you a water source that these kids are drinking from. It's literally with no exaggeration contaminated water. They let this bucket down and they get the water but it is not sealed and controlled and capped.

BETTY: They're making do with what they have but it is not good enough. It's not going to help them to be healthy. They've got this dirty, filthy contaminated water to work with. They have to drink it to even survive a day. I know that there couldn't be a greater joy from the parents of these children, James than to be able to watch their children grow up. Well, they won't be able to do that if they don't have some fresh water because after a while, the disease is going to kill them.

JAMES: And we're the answer to that problem, all of us working together, each person doing what they can because we know the need is very real. We want you to see it up close and personal. But the thing we really want you to hear and know, you're really the answer. You're the

way to provide hope and help to people who deserve it. We talk a lot about love. We talk about the love of God a lot in churches but how often do we demonstrate it? We talk so often on LIFE Today about love not in word only but in deed, and drilling fresh water wells, that's love in deed. Help us do it. Dial that telephone number and make the very best gift you can. Please do it and do it now!

End of video

In the studio

SHEILA: Thank you so, so much. If the lines are busy, keep calling. Tammy, if people want to get in touch with you or they want to keep up with your story or find out more about you, where would they go?

TAMMY: I think the best place is my website TammyTrent.com. Everything is there. You can connect with me, all my socials are there. You can stay connected in any way you want to. Or maybe you don't want to. [Laughing]

SHEILA: I'm sure they will want to. But at *LIFE*, we just want to say thank you for who you are, for what you give out of the hardest moments of your life. And I know one of these days, Tammy Trent, you're going to be standing in front of Jesus and he's going to say, "Well, done, girl! Well, done! You made it all the way home."

TAMMY: Thank you.

SHEILA: And that's what we want for every single one of you. This is not a please do this or God will be mad with you. No, no, no. We get to do this. What a privilege that we get to do this in Jesus' name. So please, go online, call that number, give the very best gift you can and let's make a difference in this world. And then, Tammy and I will bring you the new stories and we'll let you know the difference that your love and care have made. So Tammy, thanks for being with us.

TAMMY: I love you!

SHEILA: We love you too. And we'll see you next time on *Life Today*.